

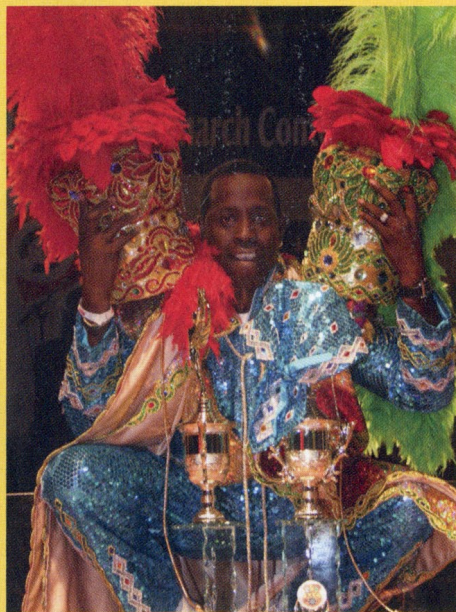
Other than a brief time at the Berklee School of Music in Boston, Claudius is self-taught; he spent many hours of his youth with his mother at the Methodist Church in San Nicolas, especially to play the piano in the auditorium, and at the home of his late cousin and mentor, Irad Illidge. Otherwise known as "Lord Boxoe", he held the record for winning the greatest number of calypsos and road marches – now surpassed by Claudius. His father was a trumpeter; his brother, Teddy Philips, is also a talented musician and performs with his own Dushi Band.

Claudius debuted at age 17 at a song festival in St. Maarten; two years later, he took 3rd place among 21 participants at the Organización de Televisión Iberoamericana (OTI) international song festival in Washington, DC, and won the Caribbean Song Festival in Aruba the next year. This jump-started an incredibly successful career that spans more than two decades during which he steadily gained fame throughout Aruba and the Dutch Caribbean and was recognized as Music Man of the Year, Superstar of the Year, Composer of the Decade, Song of the

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Above: Claudius is the unrivalled Mr. Carnival
Left: Beneath his magical show business persona is a serious artist



Year and more. His award-winning band, OREO, has been in existence since 1993 and has performed for an international clientele in Curaçao, Bonaire, St. Maarten, Surinam, the Netherlands and the United States. Claudius has released 16 CDs, the latest five of which were produced in his own recording studio.

At age 44, with 15 winning road marches and 19 winning calypsos (nine times awarded simultaneously), Claudius Philips is the unrivalled Mr. Carnival. His calypso alter-ego is aptly named "Mighty Talent". "Calypso is the most difficult to compose; I have to be careful not to offend

anyone with my political and social commentaries," he explains.

Surprisingly, Claudius considers himself more a ballad singer than anything else. Gospel music is also a big part of his life and he enjoys interpreting American songs with a calypso or reggae beat. Claudius most admires David Foster, Stevie Wonder and Lionel Richie, whom he had the pleasure of meeting at the Aruba Music Festival in 2006. "I hear the music in my head and rush to my home studio to record it before I lose it...I'm always listening, learning and watching music videos," he reveals. "With or without lyrics, music is an international language that can take your breath away," says Claudius on good authority, for his music has done so for decades.